

Washington, DC -- U.S. Representative Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica) voted again today to provide health care to 11 million children nationwide, including the nearly 651,853 children enrolled in New York's SCHIP program, Child Health Plus (CHPlus).

"As a father, I know first hand how critical health insurance is to ensure preventative care and keep our families healthy," **Arcuri said**. "It is unconscionable that in the richest nation in the world there are children in working families who don't get the medicine and care they need. To rebuild our economy and tackle the great challenges facing us as nation, we must start at the beginning – making sure the next generation is healthy."

Today, the House of Representatives passed, with Arcuri's strong support, the bipartisan State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) Reauthorization (H.R. 2), providing health care coverage for 11 million children by preserving coverage for the over 7 million children currently covered by SCHIP and extending coverage to 4 million uninsured children who are currently eligible for, but not enrolled in, SCHIP and Medicaid.

Created in 1997, SCHIP has cut the number of uninsured children by one-third in the last decade. New York reduced the number of uninsured children in the state by 40% from 1997 to 2005. Last Congress, Arcuri voted repeatedly for SCHIP legislation which was twice vetoed by President Bush.

H.R. 2 also improves SCHIP benefits by ensuring dental coverage and mental health parity. Under the legislation, dental coverage will now be provided to all children enrolled in SCHIP. It also ensures that states will offer mental health services on par with medical and surgical benefits covered under SCHIP.

The State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) Reauthorization bill is fully paid for and would not increase the national deficit.

This legislation is strongly supported by national health care advocacy groups, including the AARP, American Public Health Association, American Hospital Association, and the Catholic

Health Association, as well as the National Federation of Independent Businesses and New York Governor David Paterson.

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